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RUEH AR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 2087  
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RUEH DK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 1842  
RUEH KM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 2263  
RUEH NR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 4694  
RUEA IIA/CIA WASHDC  
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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
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RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000548

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR S. HILL  
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU  
ADDIS ABABA FOR ACSS  
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR E. LOKEN AND L. DOBBINS  
STATE PASS TO NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR B. PITTMAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/26/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [ZI](#)  
SUBJECT: TSVANGIRAI CALLS FOR AU, SADC INTERVENTION

REF: HARARE 532

Classified By: Ambassador James D. McGee for reason 1.4(d).

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SUMMARY  
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11. (SBU) In a press conference at his residence on June 25, MDC president Morgan Tsvangirai called for African Union (AU) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) intervention in establishing a "transition period" in Zimbabwe that will take into account the results of the March 29 election. Tsvangirai called for an immediate end to the violence and the release of all political prisoners, particularly MDC secretary-general Tendai Biti. He also scolded the media for sensationalizing his having sought refuge in the Dutch chancery when it should be focusing on the continuing violence and brutalization of Zimbabweans. Tsvangirai's statement reinforced his continuing effort to bring in African mediators other than South African president Thabo Mbeki but did not offer any concrete proposals for a transitional government or a government of national unity.  
END SUMMARY.

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Tsvangirai comes out of hiding  
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12. (SBU) In his first public appearance since taking refuge at the Dutch chancery on Sunday June 22, the MDC presidential candidate held a press conference in his front yard on the afternoon of Wednesday June 25. Tsvangirai appeared defiant and in good health as he repeated his decision to pull out of the Friday June 27 run-off election. He declared that any election held on Friday would not be recognized by the international community, which had rallied in support of Zimbabwe in the form of the UN Security Council resolution condemning the recent violence. Tsvangirai scolded the media for "sensationalizing" his stay at the Dutch embassy rather than focusing on the continuing brutalization of Zimbabweans at the hands of the government-sanctioned ZANU-PF youth and

war veterans.

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Actions needed to return to "normal"  
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13. (SBU) Tsvangirai outlined four actions needed to restore the normal functioning of the country and create an environment conducive to political dialogue: (1) All violence must stop, and all instruments of violence must be disbanded, including unofficial roadblocks and detention camps. War veterans and youth militias must go home. (2) The humanitarian crisis must be addressed immediately. NGOs and the World Food Programme need access to the entire country to provide humanitarian assistance to people who are starving and dying. (NOTE: The number of displaced people in Harare has risen dramatically in recent days. At least 200 people have approached the embassy seeking shelter and food in the last three days. More details to come via septel. END NOTE.) (3) All Members of Parliament and the Senate who were elected on March 29 must be sworn in to office. (4) All political prisoners and elected officials must be freed. In particular, Tsvangirai called for the release of MDC secretary-general Tendai Biti and 2,000 MDC polling agents who have been arrested.

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Calls on AU, SADC to help negotiate  
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14. (U) Tsvangirai called on the AU and SADC to manage what he termed a "transitional process" that would take into account the will of the people that was expressed in the March 29 election. This period would allow the country to heal, but must reflect the people's will. He said he had asked African heads of state to discuss a solution this weekend at their conference in Egypt. Tsvangirai further stated that it was time for action, not for "talking about talks", and that no discussion could move forward without Tendai Biti's release from prison (Reftel). Asked about South African President Mbeki's absence from the SADC troika meeting in Swaziland, Tsvangirai was dismissive and "couldn't explain" his absence.

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"An election is not a solution"  
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15. (U) Tsvangirai confirmed that he had spoken with numerous African leaders including Presidents Mwanawasa of Zambia, Wade of Senegal, Kikwete of Tanzania, and several foreign ministers who supported his proposal as a possible solution. He said that a negotiated agreement, not an election, was the only way out of the current crisis. On his proposal for peacekeepers, Tsvangirai rhetorically asked what other option there was when there were armed groups brutalizing people and no one was stopping it. He clarified that he had not called for military intervention as reported in the press, but that he hoped the UN would consider sending peacekeepers as one possible solution.

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Willing to negotiate, but when?  
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16. (U) Tsvangirai said he was willing to negotiate "this side of June 27". This contrasts with Mugabe's reported statements in The Herald, the government mouthpiece, that Mugabe was willing to negotiate "after" the June 27 election. Reporters pressed Tsvangirai for details on what his "transition period" would entail, but he declined to offer any details, saying that they would have to be negotiated.

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COMMENT

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¶7. (C) Tsvangirai continues to reach out to other African leaders to press Mugabe into some form of transition that would lead to an MDC-led government. However, it is unclear when, where, how, and in what form such an agreement would be developed. African leaders have been more outspoken in recent days, but it does not appear they are making any headway with an increasingly defiant and stubborn Mugabe. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission announced it had rejected Tsvangirai's withdrawal and that the election was moving forward no matter what. Tsvangirai's anger was clear during the press conference, but concrete solutions to the growing crisis remain elusive. END COMMENT.

McGee